

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The application is directed to new soil release graft copolymers, the processes of making the copolymers and detergent compositions comprising the copolymers.

The claims have been amended to make clearer the subject matter of the claims and its distinction from the cited art. Specifically, the subject matter of claims 5 and 7 has been incorporated into claim 3. Claim 3 is now the independent claim reciting the soil release copolymer. The subject matter of claim 21 has been incorporated into the process claim 18.

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Denzinger et al., US Patent 5,227,446. It is respectfully submitted that Denzinger does not teach or suggest graft copolymers recited by applicants' claim 3. Specifically, Denzinger teaches graft copolymers obtainable by free radical-initiated copolymerization of various monomers including those described in Denzinger's abstract. Denzinger does not appear to teach or suggest the water-solubility of its copolymer.

By contrast, applicants teach a hydrophobic graft copolymer which is anionically modified. In other words, the R substituents on applicants' polysaccharide backbone is a polymer, but R' and R" are anionic monomers. That is, applicants' claim the anionically modified graft copolymer. This is also made clear by applicants' example describing the preparation of the copolymer on page 21 and applicants' process claim 18: the graft copolymer is produced first and, thereafter, anionic modification takes place. It is respectfully submitted that Denzinger does not teach or suggest any hydrophobic graft copolymers which are anionically modified, as recited by applicants' claim 3.

Claims 1-6, 9-20 and 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Krause et al., US Patent 5,854,321.

Claims 1-6, 9-19 and 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Beck et al., DE 431 67 46.

The subject matter of claim 7 which was not rejected over Krause or Beck has been incorporated in applicants' claim 3, in a serious effort to expedite the prosecution of the application, although neither Krause nor Beck appear to teach or suggest applicants' hydrophobic graft copolymers which are anionically modified with monomer branches. Likewise, the subject matter of claim 21 has been incorporated into claim 18 which was not rejected over Krause or Beck.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the application be allowed to issue.

If a telephone conversation would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of the present application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,



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